3: Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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[754] [822] their baleful influence. Similarly, some men are supposed to possess "evil shadows," so much so, that even if snakes fall within their ambit, they cannot move an inch. When a child vomits, has [753] bowel complaints or fever, or cries unnecessarily, it is the evil eye that is thought to be responsible for [822] the malady. Let a man's evil shadow fall on rice-[273] beer, lo and behold! it does no more ferment.

[789] [754] To prevent these, Santal children are made to wear amulets of parasites on *Bhela* trees. Incantations are also uttered over some mustard seeds, a few grains of which are wrapped up in a piece of cloth and worn as a charm held by a string round the loins or the neck. In serious cases, the *Ojha* [756] (exorcist) is summoned when he chants incantations and removes the spell.

Magical charms to counteract spells are learnt by many Santals, for, who knows that 'evil eyes' may not lead them to embarrassing situations at village dances, when they may find their wearing cloth being stolen away by invisible hands? And [756] in ceremonies like marriages, the services of an exorcist are sometimes requisitioned to patrol over women with evil eyes or men with evil shadows.

Apart from these, there are various other beliefs regarding the capacity of certain men to cast magical [578] spells. Thus if an inimical person buries anything near a Santal's house, it is thought that an injury is intended.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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is intended. An exorcist is called in, who chants an incantation and allows his stick to strike all over the place. It is an unseen hand which guides him to the spot where the thing was buried. Soon they dig the place and unearth the uncanny deposit made by a malignant enemy, thus counteracting the spell cast. A peculiar instance of this nature is that when a man's cow yields a very large quantity of milk, a jealous enemy may bury milk itself, with the unholy hope that the process will diminish the supply. Similarly, if it is intended to bring harm to a man's harvest, rice is buried, and if a man's death is intended, a bone may be deposited in the earth.

754 756 789 • 789 578 [754]

Luck

Belief in luck is nothing special to the Santal. He has it in common with all the Muṇḍà tribes and the semi-Hinduised people of the Central Belt, not to speak of the caste-Hindus, many of whose superstitions have a similar flavour.

777 [171]

The Santals credit some persons with possessing "the luck of the threshing-floor." Those who are thus blest gather more harvest than others, and when they thresh the paddy, more of grains and less of chaff come out. This gift, however, can be 'stolen' by malignant persons and there are special methods of approaching such problems.

[243]

3: Mukherjea O. Y-4, 8 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
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791 and is then called a "Jan-Guru". As regards
796 the second method, it is stated that there are several
[787] *Guru Boṅgas*. The man who is devoted to them and has faith on them sees them coming to him in dreams. He then knows that the *Boṅgas* are pleased
[782] with him and want his worship. If the pupil likes it, he offers vermilion and *dhup* (incense) in the names of the *Boṅgas*, he saw in his dream. The *Boṅgas* again appear before him in dreams and tell him of their powers and ask him to worship them. With the series of *Boṅgas* thus appearing before him, the pupil becomes *Koṅka* (puzzled). He then goes to the *Boṅgathans* (the places where the *Boṅgas* live) and remains there for some days. He talks with the spirits and they assure him that whenever he remembers them, they will be at his beck and call and tell him whatever he wants to know. Thus getting his boon, the pupil returns home and continues to worship the *Boṅgas* and practise his power.

Conclusion

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755
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[171] Magic and witch-craft are an essential part of the belief of most of the Hinduised tribes and the pre-Dravidian people resident in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Although it cannot be vouched for a
[177] certainty as to whether the Santals borrowed it
[174] wholesale from the Hindus, there is some internal

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,6 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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evidence showing the influence of Hindu ideas on Santal magical practices. In the race of life, the Santal finds inexplicable super-normal phenomena. He does not know how to react to the unknown and unknowable; so he has recourse to magic to deal with the impersonal forces and energies through appropriate rites and spells. This is done not by all the Santals, but only by the *Ojha*, a specialist in the art of magic and witch-craft. And he is generally the common doctor for all the Hinduised tribes and the Muṇḍà people. What the witch-doctor does is to practise the art of dissociating himself with the aim of spirit-communication, when he chants some magic formulae and makes the patent gestures while he performs the time-honoured rites to conjure the spirits. All these he does with the aid of some spirits, and although his mission is like the priest of religion to attain curative results that endure to the benefit of Santals individually or the tribe taken as a whole, it cannot be said that anti-social results do not follow due to the activities of some malignant *Ojhas* out to wreak personal vengeance on their enemies with the aid of malevolent spirits.

3i Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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women reply in chorus. So they go on till about 3 a. m. in the morning. 535

It must be added, however, that "Lagren" is a very stimulating dance, and on these occasions the youths and maids of the tribe get plenty of opportunities for love-making. Even the steps of the dance provide facilities for courtship, as the couples face side-ways and talk as they dance. And after the dances, parties in love retire into the woods. 535 832

The songs, sung on these occasions, are mostly love-songs. An illustration is given here:— [533] [539]

Nadiaka dhare dhare
Kahar bansi baje,
Hai hai òntare kandiche.
Akhite dekhini, kanetò sunini,
Hai hai, amar òntare kandiche.

(Translation)

On the banks of the river,
Whose lute plays?
Alas! the heart weeps.
I haven't seen with eyes,
Nor heard with ears.
Alas, my heart weeps!

Nabin Mañjhi, Headman of Muruda, Mayurbhanj, said that when there are no rains, there are certain "Lagren" songs in invocation to the Rain- 533 731 782 789 [115]

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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533 731 782 789 [539]

god, which are sung to make the skies yield rain. One such sample is quoted below: –

Svarager hur hur
Prithimite dhula chilu urilò
Dhaner sisò chilu marilò
Manuser chati chilu phatilò he.

(Translation)

In the sky, clouds rumble, Oh god!
On the earth, dust flies.
Oh god! the ears of corn dry up.
The hearts of men are breaking, Oh god!

Dòñ ènèc'

535 [585] This is danced during marriages generally. Mixed men and women choose their groups and form a lively circle. The women interlock their hands gracefully, whereas, men with *Nagera* and *Madal* stand in the centre forming an inner circle. As the music continues, the dancers advance two steps to the right in a general motion. Next, they gracefully extend each feet forward. Thus they dance for twenty minutes or so, while women sing in unison. When the dance finishes, it is now men's turn to sing, while women reply in a musical chorus. This goes on for some time, when again the drums resound; the countryside echoes and re-echoes with a merry din and the dance starts afresh.

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535 796 789 world. Various magical and imitative suggestions can be noticed in "Riñja" dances. Thus agricultural implements are represented by movements suggesting a smith hammering. Other movements show the dancers cutting jungles, giving a boundary to agricultural plots, milking cows, and even cock-crows are imitated to show that the house-holder should now rise from his bed and go to his field.

796 789 535 [731] It was also stated that the Santals believe that if "Riñja" is not danced during Karam Puja, there will be no rain. In the dance movements, one can see that the dancers swing their right hand up and down, thus magically invoking rain. On other occasions, should a drought be apprehended, "Riñja" may be danced in the village *akhṛa* (the village dancing-yard) after purifying it with cow-dung and sprinkling *mithi* (a spice). This is undoubtedly a magical process to bring down rain on the earth.

[783]

Daṇṭa ènèc'

796 585 The next, "Daṇṭa," is danced during the Harvest Festival (Sòhrae) and is a special preserve of the youths of the tribe. They form two circles with the musicians in the central position. A peculiarity of the dance is that in the beginning they step twice to the right and then twice to the

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
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or fear of certain good or evil spirits surrounding him, his practical life may be said to centre round certain other pseudo-scientific or magical rites and ceremonies. He is constantly trying to dodge, control or press into service the innumerable mischievous spirits (bongas, etc.) and forces (tejo, etc.) that bring all the misery and disaster in life.

Thus in magic, the attitude of the Santal is mainly one of the defiance of control and domination over unseeen mysterious powers and the result intended is the expulsion of evil or compulsion of natural or supernatural forces and powers in the production of desired favourable conditions or results. The Santal magic referred to above, is primarily concerned with mysterious impersonal forces and powers residing mostly in natural or artificial objects and the instruments employed in dealing with them are principally charms and spells, adjurations and incantations as also certain traditional observances and taboos.

As has been beautifully and lucidly explained by Rai Bahadur Roy in the case of the Oraons, the Santals attitude to religion and magic is not mutually exclusive but complementary and supplementary. His magical practices are the result or part of his science and constitute his applied pseudo-science. They never crowd out those simple religious rites of veneration to and propitiation of, the mysterious author of our being. But whereas in the daily affairs of life of the civilized man the scientific physician is at hand, the Santal, like other primitive people, has recourse to his Medicine-man and Bonga-doctor. These latter come with their

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knowledge of herbs as well as the mysterious processes of evil caused by malevolent natural or human agencies and profess to cure the Santal of his daily ailments and afflictions. Thus magic ritualism is the speciality of Santal society and centre of the individual's life, whereas the religious ceremonials are more or less communal group affairs. The complicated cross section of the Santal belief would be well studied in the functional differentiation of the communal priest, the Ato naeke, his assistant, Kudam naeke, and Dehri (hunt-priest), the herbalist medicine-man, the Bonga-doctor or Ojha and the witch-detector on Jan-guru.

Different types of religious functionaires, medicine-man, etc.

Amongst the Santals working in the Daminiko area where they are closely concentrated, it was curious to notice many functionaries named as Ojha, Janguru, Kamruguru, Raranic, Ato-Naike, Kudam Naike and Dehri. The Santal carefully draws a distinction between the officers of his social ceremonials, the high priests of the community and the specialists who may be described in modern terms as the practising physicians and the mental disease experts, the last of course not being psychopathists but masters of spiritualist seances. The sorcerer who practises evil eye and witchcraft is also sharply distinguished.

Studying the other allied tribes nearby we find mostly a distinction between the social functionary in charge of religious festivals sharply distinguished from the spirit-doctor generally possessing second sight. The term for the priest is Naya amongst the Birhors and Pahan amongst the Mundas and Oraons. The word Naya as also Naike may have some connection with the

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courtyard there is an elevated place, square, or rectangular, the size generally being 1½'×1½'×1'. It is made of earth, and a *Tulsi* (Ocymum Sanctum L.) plant is planted in the centre of the mound over which a shed is erected. The shed is so large that it can easily accommodate 10 to 12 persons. The shed is erected by the unmarried disciples, married ones have nothing to do with the erection of the shed. The posts of this shed are of sal wood. In the centre of the shed a hen's egg and a chir sakom (a thin kind of iron wristlet or arm ornament) are kept for preventing witches from molesting them. The course lasts for four months. A woman cannot be an *ojha*. The first act of the *ojha* is what is called *Akhra rara* which means performing the opening ceremony, to ensure that all may go well and without any hindrance. The first evening the disciples bring along with them some *sindur* which is given to the *guru*. In five different places in the courtyard the *ojha* makes vermilion marks in the name of the following five different *bongas* :—

(1) Kamru guru (the reputed first teacher of *ojha* science to the Santals),

(2) Sin *Bonga* (the sun),

(3) Kali mai (the goddess Durga), [1] [^]

(4) Dibi mai (the goddess Durga),

(5) Ganga mai (the Ganges goddess).

The following invocation is offered to all of them by him after changing the names of the *Bongas* :

"Nokoe, Kamru guru (or, as the case may be, Serma Sin Thakur, etc.) amintikawam kana; nokoe cela korako

1 [Erratum: this should read "(the goddess Kali)."
^ Cf. errata sheet, category 116, p. x - Analyst]

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night before the men start for the annual tribal hunt with utterly obscene songs and practices.

5. The fifth class of spirits are the village deities, which are the following:

1. Jaher Era (female). 2. Gosain Era (female).
3. Truko Muruko (male). 4. Marang Buru (male).
5. Parganat (male).

The Santals worship the above deities periodically in the sacred grove.

6. There are spirits of the village boundary known as *Sima bongas*, and of the outskirt of the village known as *Bahre bongas*.

7. Next come tramp or stray spirits who are spirits of persons and children dying an unnatural death.

8. The spirit of the father-in-law's household, as is believed, sometime follows the bride to her new house which is known as *Naihar bonga*. As soon as a Santal is convinced that the *Naihar bonga* has come along he will either make yearly sacrifices to him, or, as there is some risk connected with it as one does not know the requirements of the foreign *bonga*, he will make arrangements to send him back at once, for by himself he will not return. If either is not done the consequences are disease and death in the house.

Another spirit that must be exercised[1] is *Kisar bonga*. The *Kisar bonga* is of a rather uncertain character. A man who has got such a *bonga* into his house will be wealthy through him as he steals from others and carries all to the house of his master, but if he is offended there is no end to the mischief he will make. If on his account disease is brought into a

1 [Erratum: this should read "exorcised." Cf. errata sheet, category 116, p. x -- Analyst]

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family, the whole of it will be exterminated if the *Kiser bonga* is not effectually sent away from the house.

9. The last to be grouped are the spirits or rather mysterious powers residing in or connected with certain objects such as battle-axe (*Kapi Karan bonga* and *Bhalua Bijai bonga*. *Bhalu* is most likely a shortened form of *Bhalua Kapi*, the name of a common form of their battle-axe), and some weird natural objects such as an abnormally gnarled bamboo-shoot, tree-roots, some weird-looking fantastic-shaped hills or a roaring cataract, a waterfall or a tank-side. These spirits are not objects of worship nor do they receive sacrifices but are mischievous spirits who have to be scared away or exorcised by the *ojha* (spirit-doctor).

Santal religious ceremonies :

The Santals have no temple nor any shed for worship but they have a *Sthan* (place) known as *Jahirsthan* where they worship the village deities. The *Jahirsthan* is a place where religious ceremonies of the village are performed by the Santals. It is situated at the end of the village and it must be within the boundary of the village. It should consist of trees belonging to the primeval forest. A cluster of sal trees about twenty to twenty-five in number, is always required. Among these trees three are essential and they must stand in a row. At the base of each of these three trees a small stone is placed representing the deities *Jaherera*, *Truko Muruko*, *Marang-Buru*. The fourth is an Ashan tree which grows anywhere near those three sal trees, and a stone is put on its base representing the diety *Pargana Bonga*. The fifth and

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wait for men. Women are protected from the designs of these ghosts by the iron bangle which they wear.

Ghosts of the dead and other private spirits who are given the title of *boiga* form part of the stock-in-trade of the two classes of people among the Santals who deal regularly with the occult- the magicians and the witches. They are bitterly opposed to each other's influence, and they clash for the most part on the battleground of sickness and disease. An exhaustive treatise on the Santal attitude to disease has been published, and shows conclusively that, as with ghosts so with sickness, the ideas of the Santals are common to all the lower strata of society in North India.[1] These ideas are not simple but complex, and range from the realm of the rational to the fantastic. Disease is sometimes ascribed to natural causes, particularly when the chain of causation is fairly obvious and can be repeated in a series of experiments; there is a whole class of food described as *batol*, which means that it is unwholesome. There are hundreds of remedies that require no supernatural aid to make them effective. Some remedies are the property of all, while others are the property of individuals and the knowledge of their ingredients is a closely guarded secret. Chaitan of Churimara began his career as a physician in response to a specific need. When he was a young man a friend had come to him in great distress and said that his boy was vomiting blood. He turned to Chaitan and asked him if he knew of any medicine that would be good for the boy. Chaitan was so sorry for his friend that he promised to do something, although when he said this he had no notion what he should do. As he was setting out for his friend's house he prayed to *Cando* and asked that he might be shown what he ought to do; at the same time he shut his eyes and kicked at the soil. As he opened his eyes again he saw a plant, which he immediately dug up. He ground the roots to make a medicine, and the boy recovered from his sickness. Since then he has applied the same remedy to many other cases. One of his patients had been extremely ill, he said, but was now the father of four or five children! He has been in great demand as a physician, and claims that *Cando* subsequently revealed many remedies to him. Sometimes it is claimed that remedies are made known in dreams. The plant that was first revealed to Chaitan was the *upel lundi* plant, which has a red flower.

[1] P. O. Bodding, *Studies in Santal Medicine and Connected Folklore*, *Memoirs of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. X.

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whatever you wished would have come to pass. You could have wound a string round one of those sticks and then if you had taken the string along with you to a cock fight you would have had good fortune, and the same would apply in hunting. But if you did not behave properly towards it and make offerings to it, it could finish you off and eat you. So that is what it is all about, and now that person will stay around anywhere at all and frighten people. He has become a *bhut*.'"

One of the methods by which it is possible to steal the powers of a dead magician, or rather to capture his "soul force", was explained in the following manner. It is necessary to go to the spot where he was cremated and there draw a picture of the dead man on the ground. If one made offerings to this picture and recited the appropriate spells, he could be brought under control. Some years ago, when a well-known *ojha* in the village of Bankadaha had died, his disciples kept guard over the spot where he had been cremated for some time after his death.

When the Santal *ojha* is called in about a case of sickness or of sudden death, his first function is to try to determine the type to which the particular misfortune belongs. He consults the oracles in order to discover whether natural causes are to blame, in which case it is called plain *rog*, or sickness, or whether it is necessary to lay the responsibility on a witch, a *boinga* or a displeased ancestor. He sits down in the courtyard and waits until two *sarjom* leaves and some mustard oil in a leaf cup are brought to him. Holding one of the leaves in his left hand, he dips his right index finger in the oil and sprinkles some drops on the ground as an offering to the spirits. While doing so he asks for guidance in determining the correct cause of the illness or fatality. He then puts a drop of oil into each of the compartments of the leaf that he is holding, one drop representing one possible agency of evil. There is one for natural causes, three or four for different *boingas*, and other drops represent households in which there may be a witch, including the sick man's house, his father-in-law's house, the houses on the other side of the village street, and so on. When the drops are in position the *ojha* rubs the two leaves together and then holds the first leaf up to the light to discern the shapes that have been taken by the oil. He pronounces the cause of the disease in accordance with the pattern that he sees. If he decides that the *boingas* are displeased, he performs the ceremony known as *bul mayam* in much the same manner as the village co-priest does during the festivals. The blood which he

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to leave. On one occasion I was informed that a woman had been killed as a suspected witch, but it was impossible to make a satisfactory investigation; and on another occasion I was asked to see the body of a young man where the villagers were convinced that witchcraft had been responsible for his death. It appeared to be a case of poisoning. Fortunately, some of the evidence relating to witchcraft and murder has been documented. Murder by Santals is comparatively rare, but fear of witchcraft is one of the most frequent motives at work. Statistics have been published for the Santal Parganas for the period 1931–40. During this period there were seventy-eight cases of homicide by Santals before the courts, and of the seventy-eight it was definitely established that sixteen were due to accusations of witchcraft.[1] It is reasonable to infer that the actual number was somewhat larger, for in most such cases the sympathy of the community is on the side of the murderers, and so it becomes a fairly easy matter to conceal the crime.

It appears that in other parts of North India the magician, or *ojha*, is a dealer in "black magic",[2] but among the Santals the order of *ojhas* might almost seem to have been called into being because of the need to defend society against the evil influence and the sorcery of witches who are the enemies of society. The *ojha* is a benefactor of society and seeks to overcome witchcraft by invading the territory of the witches and using their weapons. Each of the opposing camps is prepared to lay hands on any weapon that may serve its purpose.

The same truth is evident in all the Santal's dealings with things that he cannot understand. The attitudes summed up in the terms "magic" and "religion" are both in evidence. It is not usual in these days to distinguish sharply between them.[3] Magic is used by the Santal as a tool to accomplish many and varied ends. It is not absent from his dealings with the spirits, and it can be used for social as well as antisocial ends. It does

[1] S. M. Naqavi, "Santal Murders", an article in *Man in India*, September 1943, Vol. XXIII.

[2] W. Crooke, *op. cit.*, p. 443: "In Northern India the worker of black magic is the Ojha, a term derived from the Sanskrit Upādhāya, 'teacher', and the Syāna, 'cunning man', who follow the traditional methods handed down from their predecessors. Their stock-in-trade is a collection of Mantras or spells, many based on the magic of the Tāntras, 'rule, ritual', used in the cult of the Sakti or female energy, by which they are supposed to acquire the power of controlling spirits or demons, and of forcing them to obey the orders of the sorcerer."

[3] Cf. G. and M. Wilson, *The Analysis of Social Change*, Cambridge University Press, 1945, p. 72: "Magic for us, though it may not postulate any transcendent reality, is an integral part of primitive religion."

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consequently overlap the sphere of "religion", which, however, covers experiences where the arts of magic do not reach, while magic also works independently in some situations. For the most part, the various approaches to the problems of living are simultaneously pursued, by individuals as well as by society. "Charms" are in almost universal use as a precaution against sickness; one finds the shell of a land tortoise hung in the cowshed to ward off smallpox, or cowrie shells worn as a protection against the evil eye, and amulets worn round the arm as a matter of routine and called *ran*, or medicine. A double attitude is most apparent in efforts to control the weather that plays so great a rôle in their life. In a period of great drought the Santals probably arrange for a special festival to be held, with sacrifices offered to the "Five". At the same time they busy themselves in other ways which are quite independent of the sacrifice. Unmarried girls plaster the dancing floor with cowdung, while the married women do the same to their own courtyards. An investigation is made as to whether any woman has tied a rope on any roof. It is taboo for women to climb on roofs in the ordinary way, but some of the cowsheds and outbuildings have low roofs on which it would be possible to tie the straw to a rafter without climbing up. If it transpires that any woman has done so, she is made to climb up on to the roof and undo her work, first removing her clothing. Other investigations are made too. It may be that someone has stored dried *matkom* on the floor in her house instead of placing it on a plank or on stones; or it may be that oil has been stored in a sealed pot, in which case the covering must be removed. Underlying all these activities is the conviction that the welfare of society and of the individual depends on establishing a balance between man, nature and the spirit world, and they witness to a faith that such a balance is possible of achievement.

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of the opposite sex. On the first night the young people go through the village conducting the ceremony known as "waking the cattle". There is much drumming and dancing outside each of the cowsheds, and the cattle are feasted and decorated; small white circles made of flour are painted on their hides, vermilion is placed on their horns and heads. When all the cattle in the village have been "wakened", the young men go round once more for the "blessing" of the cattle. They are garlanded and fed with sweetmeats, and the blessing is pronounced as a hope that they will be protected from the dangers of disease and witchcraft, from thieves and the depredations of wild animals during the coming year. This "blessing" is pronounced by the women.

Other ceremonies are performed on the following days. The whole celebration may last either for three or for five days. At one time during the festival the young men of the village lock the bailiff in his home, and he is not allowed to come out until he has promised to treat them all to a drink of beer. During the second day of the festival the sub-clans perform the sacrifices to their *abge* spirits. These sacrifices are also preceded by ceremonial bathing on the part of the members of the households concerned, and the men take to the waterside their hunting implements, bows and arrows, axes and spears. The head of the house officiates, and the sacrificial animals are set apart in the same way as for the village sacrifices, having vermilion in oil placed on their heads, their shoulders and their hoofs. The flesh of the animals is, however, cooked separately from the rice with which it is eaten. On the second day also the cattle are baited. A bull is tied to a post, and the group of men who gather round it begin to infuriate the beast by persistent drumming. One or two of the men at a time, holding before them the skin of a dead animal, engage in mock combat with the bull, leaping at it and inciting it to plunge at them with its horns. The pastime continues for several hours and sometimes results in accidents. It is a happy season for the herdboys; they receive presents of cloth and are well fed by their masters. On the last night of the festival the unmarried men and girls sleep at the house of the *jogmąñjhi* in token of the fact that their period of licence is at an end.

The remaining festivals of the Santal year do not make the same stir throughout the countryside. *Mokor* is the name used in the area by Santals and non-Santals alike for the festival which takes place in mid-January. In some places it is called

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842 [595]

persuaded to take a second wife. Sometimes he may not be reluctant to take such a step for reasons quite unconnected with the need for children, though usually he is. In addition to supernatural aids there are known to be remedies for ensuring conception, and these are sought from the individuals to whom they belong. The secrets of these remedies are closely guarded. Bodding[1] has listed a number of those commonly known. My friend Bimu was in possession of a remedy which had to be taken by the patient during a menstruation period and which ensured the birth of a boy. "No one", he said, "would ask for a medicine to ensure the birth of a girl."

847 [842] [789]

Conversely, amulets are worn as contraceptives, and two different methods are used to induce abortion. One of these is to take drugs orally and the other is the highly dangerous method of piercing the womb with a stick inserted through the vagina. I have heard of the latter method being followed only by girls who wished to escape detection and who therefore could not ask anyone for medicine. Married women who resort to abortion are usually those who have already given birth to a large number of children. In one case which had fatal results for the mother she wished to avoid having a seventh child; another attempt which resulted in a serious illness for the mother, but which was otherwise successful, was made by a woman who had already had ten children.

842 843 [192]

Santals are fully aware of the connection between coitus and conception. From the time when pregnancy is suspected the child begins to exert its influence over the life of the home. A pregnant woman is called *pouti*, this being the common Bengali term, but here too the Santal love of figurative speech finds full play, and other common ways of referring to pregnancy are to speak of a "full body" or a "heavy body" or to say that the woman is now "two souls". Many of the restrictions enjoined on the woman are due to the physical dangers that surround her during the period and at its climax. These dangers may be brought about not only through natural causes but also by the action of malignant spirits. Thus it is dangerous for a pregnant woman to go anywhere when the sun is directly overhead, nor does she go anywhere alone at sunset. She should not cross a river, though some of my informants affirmed that this prohibition applies only during a first pregnancy. She may not sit on the narrow ledge surrounding the house with her legs

[1] *Memoirs of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. X, *Studies in Santal Medicine and Connected Folklore*, Pt. II, "Santal Medicine".

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844 evil eye. Most of the subsequent proceedings centre round the child.

783 The word *chatiar* is used both in connection with birth
192 ceremonial and the later initiation. It is connected with the Hindi *chut*, which means "pollution", but the ceremonial stands not only for the removal of uncleanness but also for the reception, of the new member into society. The ceremonial uncleanness resulting from birth is shared by the whole village, and no
783 religious festival may be held until it has been removed. The
846 house in which the birth has occurred is the centre of the pollution, and none of the other villagers will eat or drink there while it is in operation. If anyone is wearing a charm against illness he
• [789] removes it before entering the courtyard of the house, lest the charm lose its power. Although all the ceremonies must be completed within a month after the birth of the child, the actual dates may be modified by a variety of considerations. If a festival is due the ceremonies will be advanced rather than delay or abandon the festival. During the cultivation season they may be either advanced or delayed in order to suit the convenience of work in the fields. The normal day for the *chatiar* is on the fifth day after the birth of a boy and on the third day after the birth of a girl. The essential elements in the removal of pollution are shaving and bathing. The villagers all gather together in the courtyard, and first of all the barber—one of the villagers, a Santal—shaves the village officials, then all the men present and lastly the father of the child. The newborn child is then carried by the midwife to the barber, who cuts five locks from the child's head: two from the front, one from each side and one from the middle of the back of the head. These locks are placed in a leaf cup pending their disposal. When the shaving has been completed the men go to the nearest bathing place and bathe themselves. On their return to the house the midwife takes all the women down to bathe, and she carries the arrow that was used for cutting the umbilical cord. Two pieces of string are attached to the arrow; one of these is used to tie up in a bundle the child's hair, and at the bathing place the hairs are detached and floated away on the water. The second string is soaked in oil and turmeric and tied round the child's waist; there it remains until it is worn out, when it is always replaced by another. When the women return from the bathing place the mother sips some cowdung and water that has been prepared by the midwife and rubs some of the mixture on her head. Then three leaf cups are filled with a paste made from sun-dried rice and water. The con-